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the perfection of their instruments, the able manner in which the Superintendent has enlisted all modern improvements into his service, the care taken to have the observations properly registered, his modest and unpretending demeanor, or the noble liberality of the government, tempered with prudent economy, all unprejudiced persons must agree that the Trigonometrical Survey of the United States of America stands without a superior."

ART. VIII. — *The Life of John Collins Warren, M. D. Compiled chiefly from his Autobiography and Journals.* By EDWARD WARREN, M. D. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1860. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 420, 382.

As we have been recently reminded by Dr. Warren's successor, "the Professor at the Breakfast-Table," who can write about both as an expert, talent is of immeasurably higher value and larger availableness than genius. Pegasus, prancing in mid-air, is a spectacle to be gazed at and admired; but for the actual uses of this earthly life feet are worth more than wings, and the power of apprehending the things that are gives a working position and force, which may be supplemented, but cannot be compensated for, by the richest endowments of a creative fancy or a discursive imagination. In the subject of the memoir before us we discern talent of a rare and high order, without genius, or the show or pretence of it; and we are inclined to think that Dr. Warren's deficiencies contributed equally with his eminent gifts to constitute his merit and his fame. Among his many titles to reputation we suppose the foremost to have been that of a pre-eminently skilful and successful surgeon. The foundation for this transcending ability was, of course, the most thorough and accurate scientific knowledge of the anatomy of the human frame, not in theory alone, but in all the details of normal, abnormal, and morbid fact. In this department of knowledge there was equal need of the power of close inductive reasoning and of an inaptitude for rapid and hypothetical generalization. It was essential that theory should never exceed the

contents of observed facts, and that every inference should be the legitimate consequence of well-established premises. There was need, too, of the commensurate and equal development of the physical and physico-intellectual powers with those of pure intellect, — of the keen eye, the discriminating ear, the discerning touch, the steady hand, with judgment, invention, and prescience. All these requisites were combined, evenly balanced, and directed with unparalleled self-discipline, self-restraint, and industry through the entire life of the distinguished man, whose fragmentary records of his own experience are brought into unity in the volumes before us by the careful editorship and the graceful, impartial, and appreciating narrative of his brother.

John Collins Warren was the nephew of General Joseph Warren, the patriot physician, and the son of Dr. John Warren, who is believed to have had but one equal, and no superior, among the American surgeons of his day. He received the rudiments of his classical education at the Boston Latin School, in which for seven years he was, except for a very short interval, at the head of his class. In college he maintained a high character for scholarship and for moral excellence, and was graduated in 1797, with the Latin Valedictory, — a post of honor then assigned by vote of the class, but none the less an index of proficiency in classical learning. His father, unwilling to expose him to the cares, anxieties, and harassments of his own profession, destined him for mercantile life; but it was hardly possible that the son should not have had his ambition kindled by the father's fame. Nor ought we to omit here, though it is left in modest silence in the memoir, the eloquence and enthusiasm of the elder Warren as a Lecturer in the University. We heard in our youth, from old men who had listened to him in college, of the wonderful fascination which he imparted to themes not in themselves attractive, and especially of the thrilling tones, and often tear-choked utterance, in which he loved to exhibit the miracles of the Divine handwork in the human frame. It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise, that the younger Warren, after a year devoted to the French language under the tuition of the late Mr. Sales, embraced the medical profession, and commenced its study as his father's pupil.

The opportunities for medical study in Boston were at that time restricted. The town was healthy, the population comparatively small, and the amount and variety of surgical practice by no means extensive; and there was neither public hospital nor medical school. It was therefore determined that young Warren, after the first year, should prosecute his studies in Europe. Accordingly, in the summer of 1799, he embarked for London, where he entered at Guy's Hospital, as a "dresser" under William Cooper, the surgeon, who was shortly afterward succeeded by his nephew, the eminent Sir Astley Cooper. Here he was "immediately put in charge of about forty patients, comprising as interesting a collection of surgical accidents and diseases as could be desired." We cannot refrain from quoting his announcement, in a letter, of his introduction to active professional duty; for it indicates the strong development of the ruling passion of his life, and at the same time is the only instance in these volumes in which his language departs from the calm and even flow of a mind not easily elated or thrown from its perfect poise.

"I am the luckiest dog in life! I was called away at the end of the last period (i. e. while visiting Netley Abbey with some ladies, and preparing to explore a subterranean passage) to a dislocated shoulder, which I have reduced in very handsome style. Within the three first days of my week I have had one fracture, and one injury of the cranium; one fractured leg, and another that we thought was fractured at first; one fracture of the ribs, and this dislocation; besides two or three trifling accidents. I have been exceedingly fortunate every way; and I verily begin to think I shall be famous." — Vol. I. p. 35.

After a year in London, diligently spent in hospital service and attendance on lectures, our student went to Edinburgh, where he lived in the most retired and frugal style, and passed the morning in hearing lectures, the afternoon and evening in writing out his notes and remembrances of them. In the summer of 1801 he left Edinburgh for Paris, where he became domesticated with Dubois, then sole surgeon of the Hospice de l'Ecole de Médecine. Here he had the distinguished privilege of listening to the lectures of Cuvier on comparative anatomy and paleontology, while he devoted his chief attention to chemistry and to the anatomy of the human

body. He thus in the space of nearly three years and a half availed himself of the highest privileges and the best opportunities of the three great centres of professional science and skill, and he seems to have resorted to each of the three with a distinct conception of the part of a thorough education which it was adapted to furnish, and with a prearranged plan of life closely consonant with his purposes. No American physician had then enjoyed such ample means of professional culture ; and none can ever have been more faithful or judicious in their use. At the same time, if his character was ever immature, — which there is some reason to doubt, — it became thoroughly matured by these years of self-reliance and incessant labor, and he returned to his native town prepared to receive and merit public confidence in his professional ability and discretion, to a degree seldom attained without a protracted and weary novitiate.

At this time the elder Dr. Warren had sustained an attack of paralysis, from which he never entirely recovered ; and the son's first care was to afford his father all the aid and relief possible in his very extended practice. As soon as was consistent with his filial duty, he commenced practice on his own account, and in 1806, in addition to the care of a large and increasing list of patients, he assumed the office of Adjunct Professor of Anatomy and Surgery in the University, and continued to share the labors of that chair till he succeeded his father in it in 1815. Thenceforward it is difficult to write a consecutive story of his life ; for it had few outward vicissitudes, and may best be described, not as a routine-life, but as regular and measured movement in an orbit which grew wider with every year, and on which he became ever a more conspicuous object of regard, trust, and reverence. We, therefore, in what remains of our sketch, shall follow the leading of his biographer, and present his relations to the public and his claims upon their gratitude rather than the succession of events and incidents.

The period of his establishment in Boston was a time of previously unprecedented intellectual activity. A private society had recently been formed for the study of natural philosophy, and of this he early became an active member and lecturer. Here he was associated with Drs. Jackson and Howard of his

own profession, with Messrs. Kirkland, Popkin, and Channing among the clergy, and John (afterward Judge) Davis, Josiah Quincy, and John Lowell among the members of the bar. Before this society Dr. Warren took for one of his subjects the analysis of the well-water of Boston, and was instrumental in first drawing the attention of intelligent men to its impurities, and to the need of introducing a competent and healthful supply of water from some adequate source. This great public interest he kept constantly in view; wrote often on the subject; appeared before a committee of the Legislature; and had the satisfaction, after the labors of nearly half a century, of witnessing the consummation of his plans and hopes in the completion of the Cochituate aqueduct.

In 1803, he became a member of the Anthology Club, under whose auspices was issued the first literary periodical of high merit and commanding reputation which appeared north of Philadelphia. The Monthly Anthology was conducted with marked ability for six years, and the literary activity which it embodied and aroused led, shortly after its suspension, to the establishment of our own journal, with very much the same circle of contributors, with kindred aims, and, we trust, with similar benefit to the awakened intellect of New England. The reading-room and library of this club grew by slow stages into the Boston Athenæum, which in process of time absorbed also the Boston Medical Library, founded mainly by the exertions of Drs. Warren and Jackson.

In 1803, Dr. Warren also became a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and, in connection with Dr. Jackson, he succeeded in infusing a new life into its organization, "stimulating the members to write, and undertaking the labor of publication." In 1805, these gentlemen were appointed a committee to prepare a pharmacopœia for the use of the Society. The result of their labors was the introduction of a systematic nomenclature, the simplifying of medical prescriptions, and the diffusion of knowledge as to various remedies which had been restricted to individual practitioners or localities. We again find these same gentlemen on a committee of the Society to inquire into the efficacy of the

then recent practice of vaccination, and to report measures “for establishing the practice on a safe foundation.” The report contains “all that is now known on the subject, and the proper rules of action, from which subsequent experience has shown no reason to deviate.”

Prior to 1810, the Cambridge Medical School had hardly an existence as a distinct department of the University. The lectures were delivered at Cambridge, and were open to the undergraduates. After the removal of the School to Boston, it was obliged for several years to submit to straitened accommodations, and it was mainly through the untiring efforts of Drs. Warren and Jackson that a substantial building was erected and opened for its use in 1815. Dr. Warren, senior, who had also exerted himself largely for the same end, died on the eve of its accomplishment.

Another object which engaged the attention and enlisted the earnest efforts of the inseparable associates and friends we have so often named, was the establishment of a public hospital. An appeal to a few of the liberal citizens of Boston procured a subscription of a hundred thousand dollars, to which a grant of the State added fifty thousand. During the lapse of a few years this endowment was largely increased by legacies, several of which were obtained through the personal influence of Dr. Warren. He induced Mr. Abraham Truro, a Jewish gentleman of wealth and generosity, to bequeath ten thousand dollars for this use. He was also instrumental in procuring the legacy of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars by Mr. John McLean, whose name is perpetuated in the Asylum for the Insane at Somerville,—an institution which has its existence and administration as a branch of the Massachusetts General Hospital. He himself subscribed liberally toward the general fund of the hospital, and at a subsequent period gave a thousand dollars, the interest of which was to be appropriated for the purchase of moral and religious tracts for the use of the patients.

Dr. Warren first proposed the issue of a periodical for the advancement of medical science. The result was the establishment of the *New England Medical Journal*. This was commenced in 1812, and was continued till 1828, when it

was merged in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal. The editorship was in other hands, but the successive volumes contained frequent and valuable contributions from Dr. Warren.

Among the great social interests to which Dr. Warren devoted much of his energy was the cause of Temperance. He joined the Massachusetts Temperance Society in 1827, and from that period his efforts in this behalf were unintermitted, and were not confined even to his own country. In 1837, he acted as chairman of a temperance meeting in London, and in the same year he held a conference on the method and history of the temperance reform with several members of the administration of Louis Philippe. He attempted to supersede the use of alcohol in many medicinal preparations, successfully substituting for it "a wine produced by the fermentation of a vegetable infusion with sugar." He published an article in which he earnestly recommended this change of practice to his brother physicians; but the conservatism of the profession was too strong to admit so radical an innovation. One of his latest labors was the preparation of an historical sketch of the temperance movements for the last half-century, and in a legacy of two thousand dollars, the income of which was to be devoted to the distribution of temperance publications, he left a valuable and enduring memorial of his zeal in the cause. It is impossible to over-estimate the influence of such a man in this department of effort. Social reforms, in order to be thorough and permanent, must have the sanction and co-operation of those who hold a confessedly high place in society. The paucity of such names among the advocates of temperance has been the greatest hinderance to their success. The reason why so many men of high principle and undoubted philanthropy withhold the full force of their example and influence from this cause is perfectly obvious. They themselves and their associates are in comparatively little danger from the use of pure and costly wines as but one among the many luxuries at their command, and with them wine-drinking is often little more than a conventional formalism associated from time immemorial with the rites of hospitality. They are seldom brought

into conversance with the coarser forms of convivial entertainment, and are hardly aware of the intense peril resulting from the use of fiery manufactured wines, and maddening alcoholic liquors, where they are the only *quasi* luxury within the means of the entertainer. But so long as the more innocuous and expensive beverage is indispensable to the tables of the rich, the tyranny of fashion will enforce the use of corresponding beverages in every degree of cheapness and vileness through the entire social scale, — a scale down which reforms will run, while they cannot even creep up.

Dr. Warren's father was a worshipper at the church in Brattle Square. The son, on his return from Europe, attended the First Church, of which Rev. William Emerson was pastor, and afterward the Brattle Square Church, under the ministries of Messrs. Buckminster and Everett. In 1820 he connected himself with St. Paul's Church, at which he was a constant worshipper and communicant for the residue of his life. His religious convictions were the result of prolonged study and deliberate reflection, and, from the time that they became clear and strong, exerted their vivifying influence over his whole life and character. His biographer has preserved much of his religious correspondence, which exhibits profound humility, tender conscientiousness, undoubting faith in the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and a hope of immortality which grew constantly brighter and happier as with the lapse of years it approached its consummation. We quote the following paragraph from one of his letters, as conveying in brief what a lengthened homily might fail to say as well, on faith.

"You ask me, my dear friend, what Mr. E. means by faith. How can I answer this question to a mind more acute and better instructed on this subject than my own? I have no doubt you comprehend the object he had in view better than myself; but perhaps we may view his opinions in a different light. Like all who have dwelt much on one subject, he sees it in many relations which would not present themselves to others; and it is by the attempt to convey all their relations we are confused, and get no impression from that which is principal and pre-eminent. What does he wish us to believe but this, — that faith is not a new nor an abstract principle; that, of itself, it is nothing but a

barren speculation ; that, to make it fruitful, we must cultivate, not only the understanding, but the heart, and bring into its service, not the reasoning power alone, but the affections? We must *feel* as well as *believe*. We must feel the mighty power and goodness of our Creator, and we must realize his infinite love for us miserable beings in sending us a revelation of his character and his will by his blessed Son, and his accepting that Son as an offering for our frailties and transgressions, and listening to him as a Mediator for our prostrated and penitent souls. When the love of our infinitely beneficent Parent is brought into our view, we are not to satisfy our consciences with bowing our heads in respect and adoration, but we must bring our whole souls to realize his transcendent benevolence. With such a temper of mind cultivated into a permanent habit, all our thoughts would partake of love for that Creator who has done so much for us ; and this love would banish all meaner thoughts, all the trifles of time and space, to their proper region. This blessed spirit of love would influence all our social actions, and, beginning in the narrow sphere which encircles ourselves, would extend to all men, and all the animated works of our common Father, and at length return and rise again to Him, the source of love and happiness.”— Vol. I. pp. 177, 178.

Dr. Warren adds his emphatic testimony to that of very many of the busiest and wisest men, as regards the utility of the weekly Sabbath in preserving the powers of mind and the capacity of labor,— a ground on which the law of the Sabbath appears a law of nature no less than of revelation, inscribed on the human constitution no less than on the stone tablets of Mount Sinai. He writes :—

“So far as my observation has extended, those persons who are in the habit of avoiding worldly cares upon the Sabbath are those most remarkable for the perfect performance of their duties during the week. The influence of a change of thought on the Sabbath, upon the minds of such persons, resembles that of a change of food upon the body. It seems to give a fresh spring to the mental operations, as the latter does to the physical. I have a firm belief, that such persons are able to do more work, and do it better, in six days, than if they worked the whole seven.

“The breathing the pure and sublime atmosphere of a religious Sabbath refreshes and invigorates the mind, and forms the best preparation for the labors of the following week.”— Vol. I. pp. 204, 205.

For thirty-five years Dr. Warren devoted himself to profes-

sional duty almost without intermission. The first period of relaxation he allowed himself was in 1837, when he revisited England, and travelled very extensively on the continent of Europe. Even this seems to have been hardly a vacation; for his diary is full of medical and surgical notes. Interesting cases of fracture, tumor, or epilepsy, the methods of distinguished surgeons, and the arrangements of hospitals, were the chief objects of his regard, to which scenery and art are secondary and incidental. By this we would by no means convey the idea that he was inaccessible to the attractions presented by nature and by human genius. Some of his letters display an intense susceptibility to the influence of the outward universe, and he had almost a poet's tenderness for some favored spots in his own native neighborhood, especially for Wachusett and its surroundings. At the same time, he was a lover and a liberal patron of the imitative arts, and manifested an eminently pure and refined taste in all that related to domestic architecture and horticulture. But this European tour, made in the midst of an arduous and successful practice, and fraught with opportunities for observation such as his well-earned celebrity alone could have procured for him, seemed like a special mission for professional purposes, and it is no wonder that his sympathies as a surgeon gave the chief direction to his curiosity, and held the foremost place in his record of travel. When in 1851, at a period of less engrossment in the great pursuit of his life, he again visited Europe, we find traces of a less exclusive devotion to his favorite science, and more extended comments on the objects that usually attract the attention of tourists.

As years advanced, and with them, with more than even pace, the infirmities of old age, he resigned one by one his more laborious posts of service; yet, till within eight days of his death, he continued to visit his patients as often as his declining health permitted. His fatal illness was brief; he contended almost to the closing hour with disease and debility, manifesting, while resigned to die, a strong hold on life; insisted on the last day on being placed upon his feet; and met the final change in a sitting posture. His decease was on the 4th of May, 1856.

Dr. Warren's self-consecration to science was displayed in no way more emphatically than in the directions left by him in writing for the disposal of his own body after death. The following is an extract from a letter of instructions to his son : —

" To be opened after my Death, and before the Funeral.

" The final and principal object of writing this letter is this, which regards the disposition of my mortal remains after the spirit has quitted them. The arrangement I wish is the following, subject to any peculiar circumstances of season, &c. : —

" 1. Let the body be injected with arsenic after death, *soon*.

" 2. The funeral solemnities to take place in St. Paul's Church, in the full and proper form of the church service.

" 3. The body afterwards to be removed to the Medical College; examined or dissected, according to circumstances. Any morbid parts to be carefully preserved; and particular attention is to be paid to the heart, spleen, and prostate gland.

" 4. The bones to be carefully preserved, whitened, articulated, and placed in the lecture-room of the Medical College, near my bust; affording, as I hope, a lesson useful, at the same time, to morality and science.

" I earnestly request that you and my family will lay aside any natural feeling of opposition to this my last request, considering that it is for the interest of humanity, and for mine and their honor.

" Finally, I take leave of you in the hope of our meeting again, and enjoying the society of our blessed friends who have gone before.

" Affectionately,

" JOHN C. WARREN.

" Boston, July 14, 1842." — Vol. II. p. 359.

There is absolute heroism in these directions, when viewed in connection, on the one hand, with Dr. Warren's well-known character, and on the other, with his professional experience. When a cold-blooded sceptic, whose heart has never thrilled with a tender sentiment, and who has looked upon himself as a mere earth-clod stimulated into brief activity and to be resolved into thin air and lifeless dust, leaves orders to cheat the grave of its due, we feel disgust, yet no surprise. But Christian faith and the undying hope to which it gives birth attach a sacredness to the body which has been the tenement of an immortal soul, and none are so heedful of the rites of sepul-

ture and the inviolableness of the tomb, as those whose belief in Christian verities is the most intimate and vital. This feeling is enhanced by the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which, no doubt with some latitude of construction, is an essential article of the creed of the Church to which Dr. Warren gave his allegiance. It can have been only by stern self-conflict, and under an imperative conviction of duty, that he was brought to provide a cenotaph for his memorial in the cemetery. But he had been made painfully aware of the need, for the benefit of the living, of a surgeon's unrestricted access to the members and the healthy and morbid organism of the human frame. He had been foremost among his brethren in efforts for overcoming the popular scruples to the dissecting-room, and procuring through legal methods a supply of subjects for the knife. He had claimed for science the bodies of the friendless, who died in public institutions, as well as of those who met their fate under sentence of the law. The question with him was one of sincerity and self-consistency. Should he, who had demanded that the natural sentiment for the dead should yield to the still more cogent exigencies of the suffering and imperilled, succumb to the feeling which he had spent his life in combating? We cannot but regard this bequest to his favorite science as a noble act of self-sacrifice; and while our intuitive sympathies are all arrayed on the other side, we feel constrained, by their instinctive recoil and shudder, to hold his memory only in the profounder respect and honor.

We have said but little of Dr. Warren in his own peculiar department, because his transcending merits as an anatomist and surgeon demand the hand of an expert to do them justice. We close our notice with some few details that may interest the general reader, referring those who may seek a fuller knowledge of his services to the volumes before us.

He was among the foremost of his time in cultivating the science of comparative anatomy, and was especially among the pioneers in our own country in the study of paleontology. His great work on the *Mastodon Giganteus* is an enduring monument of his patient industry and his extended knowledge in this recondite department of research. He obtained at his own expense a tolerably complete skeleton of a mastodon discovered

on Hudson River, and various other similar relics, on which he lectured repeatedly in Cambridge and Boston. He took also a deep interest in the craniological researches of Gall and Spurzheim, and made a large collection of brains, both of human subjects and of various classes of animals. It does not appear to what extent he accorded with the phrenological theory of Spurzheim; and it was probably with him rather an hypothesis for the collation of facts and the induction of general laws, than a representation of ultimate truth. By his agency, the valuable collection of the Boston Phrenological Society, containing more than five hundred and fifty articles, became the property of the University, and was deposited in the Massachusetts Medical College.

Very early in his medical practice, Dr. Warren had partly anticipated a great discovery of our own day, in the employment of sulphuric ether to alleviate the pain of dying, particularly in pulmonic disease. In 1846 he performed the first surgical operation in which ether was used as an anæsthetic agent, and became at once fully convinced of its vast importance in surgery. In the course of the first year's practice after this initial experiment he employed ether in more than two hundred cases, the results of which he communicated in a work entitled "Etherization, with Surgical Remarks." He strenuously opposed the use of chloroform, as at once dangerous even in skilful hands, and proffering strong temptation as a medium of inebriation. Chloric ether he preferred on trial to sulphuric ether, as more agreeable and less irritating to the lungs.

Among his important services to the public was the introduction to general use of "cracked wheat" as a preventive and remedy for constipation. He had previously used and recommended bread prepared from grain in which the bran was retained; and to his precept and example, and his admirable treatise on "The Preservation of Health," we are largely indebted for the dietetic reform in this respect which has taken place in domestic habits.

The catalogue of Dr. Warren's writings contains nineteen titles of separate works, with a very long list of medical, surgical, and scientific articles communicated to various periodicals and associations. The list of larger surgical operations,

performed by him at the Massachusetts General Hospital, exceeds five hundred in number, to which must be added those performed in the preceding twenty years, and afterward in his private practice.

These volumes contain medical and surgical papers and notes on a very wide diversity of subjects, and indicate an amount of industry with mind and pen rarely equalled, perhaps never exceeded, by one whose calls to active duty were so incessant and urgent. The entire record impresses us with admiration for his ability, skill, discretion, and various learning, and vindicates his title to a high order of intellectual merit, and a place among the most illustrious names in a profession second to no other in the eminent endowments of those who have been its ornament and honor. At the same time, we discern through his whole life uncorrupt integrity and good faith, transparent sincerity, and scrupulous conscientiousness. We suppose his to have been a somewhat hard and rigid nature, in great need of the intenerating influence imparted by the gentle faith and the loving spirit of Christianity ; but this renovating power was manifestly infused into his whole being, — was not a force *ab extra*, but a new and modifying element of spiritual life, making him true to its divine ideal, and consecrating his powers and endowments to the service of God and man.

The memoir is compiled with eminent skill and felicity. The author has incorporated with it large portions of the diary and correspondence of its subject, which it was deemed desirable to preserve in a permanent form ; and it was thus necessary often to duplicate the narrative, in order to connect fragments of manuscript which would otherwise have left the life-story imperfect. Dr. Edward Warren's style is chaste, perspicuous, and strong. The work could not have fallen into better hands, or have been executed more faithfully or more lovingly. It appears in the best style of the publishers, and with several well-executed engravings. It presents, of course, the strongest claims upon the interest of the medical profession ; but the general reader will prize it, both as giving him a lifelike portraiture of a worthily eminent man, and as conveying, with the fewest technicalities possible, a large amount of valuable knowledge on a wide range of subjects seldom presented in a form so simple, intelligible, and attractive.